

Appln No. 10/616,631
Amdt date May 4, 2007
Reply to Office action of February 5, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 were pending in this application when last examined by the Examiner. Claims 1-3, 13-14 and 17-18 have been amended. Claims 19 and 20 have been added. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims, and drawings. No new matter has been added. In view of the above amendments and remarks that follow, reconsideration, reexamination, and an early indication of allowance of the now pending claims 1-20 are respectfully requested.

The Abstract has been amended to comply with the U.S. patent rules. Entry of the amendment to the amendment to the Abstract is respectfully requested.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 17 has now been amended to be directed to a computer readable medium which is clearly statutory subject matter. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11, 13-15 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable over Humpleman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,039,858). Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humpleman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,039,858) in view of Brownell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,336,147). Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humpleman et al (U.S. Patent No. 7,039,858) in view of Stefaniak (U.S. Patent No. 6,550,054). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim 1, as amended, recites:

"An automotive control system for electrical equipment included in an automobile vehicle, the automotive control system comprising:

an electrical equipment group including at least one piece of electrical equipment included in the automobile vehicle; and

a control unit or units in the automobile vehicle connected to said electrical equipment group and providing a graphical user interface (GUI) for controlling said electrical equipment group to a user of the automobile vehicle, the GUI having a dual structure that separates a functional GUI that controls the function of said electrical equipment from a main GUI that executes one or more processes including transitioning to said functional GUI, wherein:

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said electrical equipment has a functional GUI data storage means for storing GUI data for said functional GUI, and

said control unit has a main GUI data storage means separate from the functional GUI data storage means for storing GUI data for said main GUI and a GUI processing software storage means for storing a GUI processing software for providing said GUI based on each of said GUI data for said functional GUI and said main GUI and for controlling said electrical equipment."

These limitations are not taught nor suggested by Humpleman nor any of the cited references.

Humpleman discloses an interface for accessing home devices that are connected to a home network. The interface provides a home page for a particular home device, which the Examiner equates to the claimed "functional GUI," and a device link page containing device buttons for each home device connected to the home network, which the Examiner equates to the "main GUI."

Humpleman, however, is not directed to an "automotive control system for electrical equipment included in an automobile vehicle," and thus, does not address the problem that the claimed invention is directed to. (Emphasis added). That is, the problem addressed by the claimed invention is the problem in automotive vehicles where an entire GUI program must be changed when an electrical equipment of the automotive vehicle is replaced or the GUI is modified in accordance with a user's preference or the area where the vehicle is sold. (See, specification par. 0018). Claim 1, however, provides a "GUI having a dual structure that separates a functional GUI that controls the function of said electrical equipment from a main GUI that executes one or more processes including transitioning to said function GUI," to allow easy upgrade of the GUI corresponding to the addition and/or removal and/or change of the electrical equipment. To this end, amended claim 1 recites that "said control unit has a main GUI data storage means separate from the functional GUI data storage means." (Emphasis added). The cited reference fail to teach or suggest this problems, methods for solving the problems, and the effect thereof. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

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Independent claims 17 and 18 include limitations that are similar to the limitations of claim 1 which make claim 1 allowable. Accordingly, claims 17 and 18 are also in condition for allowance.

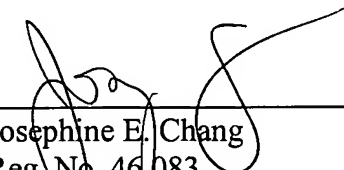
Claims 2-16 are also in condition for allowance because they depend on an allowable base claim and for the additional limitations that they contain.

Claims 19-20 are new in this application. These claims are also in condition for allowance because they depend on an allowable base claim, and for the additional limitations that they contain. Specifically, these claims require that "the functional GUI is configured for being replaced or updated without replacing or updating the main GUI in response to addition, removal, or change of the electrical equipment in the automobile vehicle," which is not taught nor suggested by the cited references.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, an early indication of allowance of the now-pending claims 1-20 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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